



COLORADO RIVER INDIAN TRIBES  
Colorado River Indian Reservation  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Disease Tests On Poultry Return Positive**  
**Tribe-USDA Partnership Working**  
**To Contain and Eradicate Disease**

*Precautions Will Likely Include Quarantines, Destruction of Affected Flocks*

PARKER, Arizona (February 4, 2003) — Tests for Exotic Newcastle Disease on poultry on the Colorado River Indian Reservation in western Arizona have returned positive, and further steps will be taken to fully contain the disease.

Tests performed over the weekend and Monday by both the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory in California and the National Veterinary Services Laboratory (NVSL) in Ames, Iowa confirmed the disease. It is the same virus strain detected in poultry in southern California.

Since learning of the possible outbreak, the Colorado River Indian Tribes' Fish & Game Department has been working closely with the United States Department of Agriculture's Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, as well as the Arizona Department of Agriculture. All agencies are now partnering to contain the virus and prevent additional infections elsewhere in Arizona.

The USDA conducted tests on chickens from a flock near Poston, which showed symptoms of the disease last week. As a precaution, the entire flock was euthanized, and the CRIT Tribal Government imposed a quarantine on all domestic birds on the Reservation.

That quarantine will continue indefinitely, and it is likely that more birds on the reservation will be euthanized as a precaution against the spread of the disease to other parts of the Reservation and the State of Arizona.

Tribal officials believe the quick action and cooperation with federal officials will prevent the disease from spreading to other poultry populations in Arizona.

“We continue to work closely with our federal partners to try to stop any further outbreak of Exotic Newcastle Disease,” said the Chairman of the Colorado River Indian Tribes, Daniel Eddy, Jr. “We want to make sure we take all necessary steps to protect the region’s poultry. And we’d like to thank the USDA in particular for their very quick, professional response,” Eddy Jr. said.

The outbreak came to light earlier this week, when a farmer near Poston called the Tribal offices to report the death of chickens. CRIT officials immediately called the USDA’s Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service, which sent a foreign animal disease diagnostician and a veterinary technician from Phoenix to investigate the problem.

Over 1 million birds in California and Nevada are currently under quarantine because of an outbreak of Exotic Newcastle Disease. For more information on Exotic Newcastle Disease in poultry, you may visit the USDA’s web site at the following address:

[http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/pubs/fsheet\\_faq\\_notice/fs\\_ahend.html](http://www.aphis.usda.gov/lpa/pubs/fsheet_faq_notice/fs_ahend.html)

Exotic Newcastle Disease is highly contagious among poultry and other birds. However, it does not pose a significant health risk to humans, in rare circumstances it has been known to cause “Pink Eye”. This condition is easily treatable with antibiotics.

The Colorado River Indian Tribes lie along the Colorado River in western Arizona and eastern California. The Tribes’ have a long history of robust agricultural enterprises including alfalfa, cotton, wheat, melons, and produce.